

Good morning. My name is Dan Russell, and I am Chief Executive Officer of Genesee County Community Mental Health Services. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. I know you are all working very hard to resolve the state's budget crisis. Our Agency represents over 12,000 individuals with a mental illness or a developmental disability, and 5,000 individuals with a substance use disorder.

The most recent proposed cuts will devastate an already overburdened system that is the safety net for Genesee County's most vulnerable citizens:


- The 6% Medicaid rate reduction that is scheduled to take effect June 1, 2007, will take \$1.5 million out of the County during the last 4 months of the fiscal year. This rate reduction will result in reduced payments to providers affecting thousands of consumers and employees
- The proposed elimination of the Public Act 2 funds for substance abuse has the potential to shut down major portions of the provider network in Genesee County, and will have a similar effect state wide. The PA2 funds constitute over \$1 million for Genesee county substance use services, and \$35 million, or approximately 13% of the entire state wide funding for substance use services. A cut of this magnitude will cripple an overworked and under funded system.

The combined impact of these cuts is impossible to determine, but conservatively, thousands of individuals that need mental health and substance use services will not get the care they need and deserve. Given that this hearing is targeted towards the health and safety of our children, these cuts will have an enormous impact on them.

Not only will these cuts affect services for children and adolescents, but also their support systems. Our children need stable, healthy adults in their lives to help and protect them. Without the services to help their parents and the other important adults in their lives, our children are put at jeopardy, in an already fragile and overwhelmed system.

On behalf of our children and consumers, I urge you to restore the Medicaid funding and the PA2 funds.

Thank you.



Danis Russell

Chief Executive Officer

Genesee County Community Mental Health